

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application after this Amendment. Claims 1-22 are rejected. Claims 23 and 24 have been newly added. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define allowable subject matter.

The abstract has been objected to for containing less than 50 words. Applicants have amended the abstract to include more than 50 words. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the objection to the abstract should be withdrawn. Applicants have also amended paragraph 0044 to correct a minor typographical error.

Claims 1-10 and 12-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Mullen et al. (U.S. Patent 6,689,055), hereafter Mullen. Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mullen in view of Robin (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0005935). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the reasons set forth below.

Each of independent claims 1, 14 and 21 variously recite providing “an electronic notification of completion” of at least one ultrasound scan. The Office Action states that the Mullen reference teaches such notification. Applicants respectfully disagree.

In the portions of the Mullen reference cited by the Office Action, the Mullen reference describes a system that stores keystroke information along with time, date, etc. information preferably in long-term storage such that many days of keystroke logs can be analyzed (column 2, lines 13-21). A billing capability is also provided for generating bills based on ultrasound system usage as determined by a keystroke analysis server (column 11, lines 8-10). The system of Mullen also may automatically download a bill to an accounting department at a remote facility at regular billing intervals or after each exam (column 8, lines 4-6).

The keystroke information generated by the system of Mullen is associated with either days of exams or based on time stamps associated with turning on and turning off of the power to an ultrasound imaging system, but not as determined by the completion of one or more scans performed during an ultrasound examination. The system of Mullen uses information relating to complete sessions (from the time the ultrasound imaging system is turned on until the system is turned off) to generate reports, which include multiple exams that may include multiple scans. The Mullen reference does not describe providing electronic notification of a completion of one or more scans during an ultrasound examination. There is nothing in Mullen that describes providing time stamps or keystroke information related to individual scans and thereafter the ability to provide electronic notification of the completion of the individual scans. This type of per scan or per procedure notification is not described. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 14 and 21 are allowable.

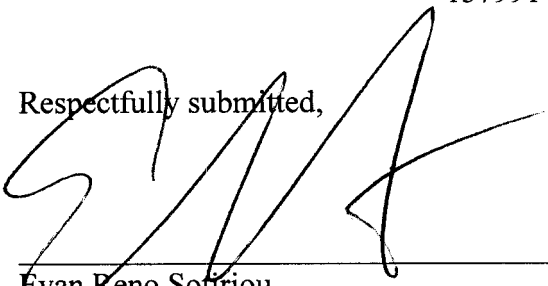
Moreover, dependent claims 2-13, 15-20, 22 and newly added claims 23 and 24 recite subject matter not anticipated or rendered obvious by the cited references. Moreover, these dependent claims are also allowable based at least on the dependency of these claims from the independent claims.

There may be additional and/or alternative reasons to the reasons argued herein and/or herebefore that claims 1-24 are each patentable over the cited references. Without waiver of any additional and/or alternative reasons, Applicants reserve the right to argue any additional and/or alternative reasons hereafter.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references neither anticipate nor render obvious the claimed invention and the pending claims in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited. Should anything remain in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

PATENT
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Respectfully submitted,



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